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ABSTRACT

This report contains a summary of the recommendations of the 4 Task Forces created to study 4 significant aspects of higher education in Connecticut. These areas were: (1) needs: socioeconomic, manpower, and regional; (2) function, scope and structure of Connecticut's higher education system; (3) financing; and (4) qualitative and quantitative performance and achievement. The Task Forces studied in detail how the State's institutions were meeting current needs, they attempted to project how and in what direction these demands would change and grow in the decade ahead, and to develop possible approaches to a number of higher education's dilemmas. Abstracts of these 4 reports are included. (AF)

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FOUR TASK FORCES REPORT TO THE CONNECTICUT COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

A summary of their recommendations: Action for the Seventies

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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The Connecticut Commission for Higher Education wishes to express its gratitude to the Task Force members who prepared this report. In June 1970 the Commission established four Task Forces with broad representation from the educational, business and civic communities of the State. Each Task Force was asked to consider a different aspect of higher education. Their separate reports express the conclusions and recommendations of Task Force members exclusively. They are not necessarily the views of the Commission for Higher Education.

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ACTION FOR THE SEVENTIES

How should higher education respond to the challenges of the Seventies?

That is the basic question with which about 75 of Connecticut's leaders in business, education and civic affairs--at the invitation of the Commission for Higher Education--have been grappling for the past six months.

Organized into four Task Forces, the advisory panels were asked to study four significant aspects of higher education:

1. Needs: Socio-Economic, Manpower, Regional
2. Function, Scope and Structure of the State's Higher Education system.
3. Financing
4. Qualitative and Quantitative Performance and Achievement

Because of time limitations, the Task Forces were forced to select among many complex issues the ones to which they would give most of their attention. Then they began their research.

Before offering recommendations as to how Connecticut can best meet its responsibilities to all its citizens who want and can benefit from post-secondary education, Task Force members studied in detail how the State's institutions of higher education are meeting current needs. Then they attempted to project how and in what direction those demands will change and grow in the decade ahead. From this information, they proceeded to develop what they believe to be viable approaches to a number of higher education's dilemmas.

A summary of the recommendations of each of the four Task Forces appears on the following pages.

TASK FORCE I

WHY

Among the goals of higher education are the satisfaction of the aspirations of individuals, the fulfillment of the needs of society and the provision of manpower for the economy. To identify what the total demands on higher education will be during the next decade, it was necessary for Task Force I to estimate social and economic trends; to project what new kinds of manpower may be needed; to estimate from past enrollments and reportedly rising expectations what the probable demands for higher education will be, and to search for innovative ways to facilitate learning without increasing costs. Task Force I was also charged with investigating the causes of student unrest and recommending structures for assuring academic freedom, right of dissent, and continuity of learning in higher education in Connecticut.

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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Task Force I members adopted the philosophy that Connecticut and its educational institutions have an obligation to provide some form of higher education to all who want and can benefit by it, either as an entree to meaningful, productive jobs or for greater self-fulfillment, or both. They recommended, in brief, that the Commission for Higher Education

1. Find ways to encourage the timely introduction of innovations into the curriculum and into methods of operation and techniques of teaching, at least on a pilot basis.

2. Provide young people with more options for post-high school experience.

3. Adopt and promote the concept of education as a unified lifetime experience and make it easy for people to move through the system without putting barriers, in the form of unnecessary requirements, in their way.

4. Provide more opportunities and encouragement for women to be educated for the professions, government and service positions and technical jobs.

5. Avoid setting up new programs that will duplicate unnecessarily those already being offered by neighboring institutions.

6. Explore ways of achieving broad, general cooperation between public and private institutions, through consortia, contracts or other means.

7. Encourage the use of community resources off-campus to augment the resources of higher education.

8. Encourage the setting up of External Degree Program on a pilot basis.

9. Emphasize preparation for broad work categories or clusters of jobs, whenever possible, rather than for specific jobs.

10. Upgrade the image of vocational education and deepen appreciation for the idea that creativity can be expressed by means other than words.

11. Encourage a better mix of liberal arts and vocational education, varying the emphasis according to each individual's life goals.

12. Extend the training of counselors in contemporary approaches, including the use of the computer as a counseling tool. This "blanket" recommendation includes suggestions for wider dissemination of information, introduction of counseling into the elementary grades, and greatly extended programs for training teachers and counselors for the elementary and secondary schools.

13. Make up-to-date personal counseling available to all segments of the population, not just students, through regional centers, supported by a computer service. The computer would match up qualifications and preferences of applicants with the measurable characteristics and requirements of the state's institutions of higher education.

14. Appoint a study team to review admissions requirements and programs in light of the changes taking place in job requirements and personal expectations.

15. Encourage the acceptance by all institutions of higher education, but especially by the community colleges, of a certain number of students who give evidence of potential even though their background does not fall into traditional kinds of preparation.

16. Participate with other agencies, as appropriate, in ongoing studies of socio-economic trends, projections for both long-range and short-range implications for education, and a continuing review of faculty and curriculum to ascertain how they are fulfilling the needs.

17. Promote a paraprofessional career ladder that recognizes workers' capabilities and helps them to get further education while working.

18. Expand continuing education program to include more suitable courses at more locations, making the same resources available to those who cannot carry a full-time, day-time program leading to a degree as are offered to full-time students.

19. Initiate closer working relationships with agencies in the State concerned with elementary, secondary, vocational and continuing education, in order to coordinate policies and activities, since what happens at each level of the total system affects all the others.

20. Encourage the establishment of a voluntary Faculty Service Corps to work in community service, in field projects, in overseas teaching or in other practical service positions, with volunteers returning to the campus to share their firsthand experiences with students.

21. Focus on clearing up causes rather than on formulating additional legislation for dealing with student demonstrators. No additional legislation is needed.

22. Avoid enacting new laws and statutes that are punitive or repressive in nature. Present statutes are sufficient and adequate for the protection of the colleges and the people against violence, for the punishment of offenders, and to insure due process for students.

23. Make sure students understand existing laws and then stand firm on them.

24. State definitively to all members of the community the university's policy, rules and guidelines for proper conduct.

25. Enforce discipline effectively and fairly, with academic due process.

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TASK FORCE II

WHY

Task Force II was charged to assess and make recommendations concerning the function, scope, and structure of higher education in Connecticut. The task was defined as follows:

In order to make higher educational opportunities available to meet the needs of individuals and of the State, it is imperative to reassess what constitutes higher education. Teaching, research, and service are three major functions identified for higher education. However, questions still remain as to which aspects should be offered under State supervision and/or auspices, and what structures assure a maximum return in quality and quantity of higher education. The dimensions of higher education continue to change. Thus the structure for assuring maximal delivery of opportunities needs continuous examination. While much of the structure grows out of tradition, reexamination and readjustment on the basis of new experiences become imperative. (Commission for Higher Education, June 1970)

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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Task Force II recommended that

1. The Commission for Higher Education should conduct regular reviews of its relationships with State agencies and the State's institutions of higher education. Such a review should assess the strength of the Commission's expertise and capability and the extent of the Commission's influence in assuring the higher education system's responsiveness to State educational needs.

2. The present structure of higher education should not be altered until such studies are undertaken.

3. These studies should foster a free flow of information between agencies and institutions concerning cost, program, admissions and enrollment, financial aid, and legal bases for policy.

4. A special study should be conducted to examine the expectations and perceptions that institutions and agencies have of each other.

5. The Commission for Higher Education should be influential in establishing educational policies for the State that are based on priorities which will contribute to the well-being of the State. Such priorities should be set forth as short term and long term.

6. The Comission should have the responsibility and leadership for ensuring that all institutions of higher education in the State are involved in the derivation of priorities.

7. The Commission should have the authority to collect information from all institutions having post-secondary educational programs in order to fulfill its leadership role in planning.

8. The Commission should take greater leadership in the evaluation of higher education in the State.

9. The Commission for Higher Education should, in cooperation with higher education institutions, determine how the various subsystems of higher education in the State can serve the public through clarification of their individual and collaborative missions. The mission study should address itself to such questions as:

   a. Should community and technical colleges be merged?

   b. Should the University of Connecticut begin undergraduate education at the upper levels--junior and senior years--with the first two years of study offered only at its two-year branches?

c. Should current two-year branches of the University merge with the regional community college system?

d. Should doctoral programs be offered at the State colleges?

e. Under what circumstances <u>if any</u> should two-year college programs be expanded to four-year programs?

f. What is the place of post-secondary programs, such as proprietary schools, in statewide higher education planning?

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TASK FORCE III

WHY

Costs of providing educational programs and services are escalating. Demands for additional services, such as student financial assistance, are increasing. As costs rise, the taxpayer logically asks what return he is getting on his investment.

The fiscal problem is as critical for capital expenditures as it is for operating expenses. Institutions of higher education, both public and private, are under pressure to find ways to make more efficient use of financial, manpower and physical resources, while at the same time improving the quality of programs.

Task Force IV's discussions centered on alternate courses of action and their fiscal implications. Members tried to anticipate the cost of higher education by 1980 for programs and services recommended by other Task Forces. After studies of current operating and capital expenditures, Task Force IV attempted to identify alternate sources of funds and alternate means of financing and to recommend levels of support required.

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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Its most important recommendation, Task Force III feels, is that the Commission for Higher Education have a greatly expanded role in planning the future of the State's system of higher education. It major recommendations are:

1. Planning: Task Force III urges that the Commission for Higher Education expand its planning activity significantly....that all long range planning should be controlled by and funded through CHE... that a fund be appropriated annually in an amount equal to one percent of the operating budgets of the four constituent units to support planning activities by the Commission.

2. Management Information System: A management information system should be established by the Commission for Higher Education in concert with the constituent units of higher education to provide data that will permit ready and accurate measurement of the performance of the higher education enterprise.

3. Community Colleges: Task Force III recommends that pending a review of the entire community college system, no more Community Colleges be opened in the State and that no construction or expansion of major new facilities be undertaken.

4. Independent Colleges: It is recommended that the Commission for Higher Education...take immediate action to develop plans to utilize more fully the resources of the independent colleges of the state and to enable them to make their most effective contribution to the total system of higher education in Connecticut.

5. Tuition: It is proposed that the Commission for Higher Education, in cooperation with the constituent units, establish a rate of tuition (and/or fees) for in-state undergraduate students which will approximate a return of 20% of the educational and general costs of the unit as supported by the general state fund appropriations, less expenditures for organized research and extension and public service... it is proposed that a level be set that approximates 50% of the costs as described for out-of-state students. Sums collected should be dedicated to restricted purposes that are in the best interest of the public system of higher education.

6. Student Financial Assistance: The Task Force recommends that uniform guidelines be developed to determine financial need and that sufficient state funds be made available through the State Scholarship Commission and through the individual institutions to permit needy students with ability to attend college.

7. Budget Procedure for Higher Education: It is recommended that the Commission for Higher Education...modify its established procedures to provide a continuing review of the operating requirements of the constituent units...consistent with the established goals of the units and the fiscal capacity of the state that the respective Boards of Trustees of the constituent units retain fiscal autonomy in the use of appropriated funds.

8. Salary Administration: Task Force III has recommended a number of specific proposals for the Commission to follow in carrying out its mandate to review proposed changes in salary scales. This recommendation includes the establishment of a salary review board and a broader range of salary grades for positions.

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TASK FORCE IV

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WHY

Task Force IV was concerned primarily with the nature of evaluation, and the specific qualitative and quantitative aspects of evaluation practices. One of the central concerns of the Task Force was a consideration of the criteria used by institutions of higher education to measure individual status, performance and development after leaving colleges or universities. Members of the group discussed at length the difficulty of adequately measuring the quality of the teaching-learning process with numerical measures. The Task Force offered specific recommendations dealing with this and other points within the range of its study.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Each institution within the system should define its goals and functions in such terms as to make it possible to check whether the goals are achieved, and should reconsider its goals and functions periodically to see whether they should be changed.

2. A special task force should be created by the Commission for Higher Education to study, from time to time, the development of theory and practice in the evaluation of higher education.

3. Each institutional unit of the system of higher education should periodically evaluate, in the light of goals and functions mentioned in 1, its inputs, its processes, and its performance, with evaluation of performance of highest importance.

4. An organization should be designated as the unique authority to evaluate the system of higher education as a whole. If necessary, specific recommendations should be made by the Commission to the legislature in order to effect this recommendation.

5. The Commission for Higher Education, working with each institution of higher education and with the State Department of Education, should develop longitudinal studies which will measure the outcomes of higher education in terms of the performance of individuals after leaving college.

6. Student and alumni evaluations (e.g., of courses, instructors and general campus atmosphere) should be widely and consistently used.

7. In justifying budget requests made to the state legislature, the Commission for Higher Education should coordinate efforts of the separate institutions to develop, agree upon and report realistic indices which measure "value added" to the population being evaluated.

8. The Commission for Higher Education has the unique responsibility among the constituent units for developing from sources external to the public system files of pertinent data which will be useful in the measurement of value produced in higher education.

9. Each collegiate institution in Connecticut must be provided with the computer capacity necessary to develop and to maintain master data files which will provide information for decision-making at the campus level.

10. While acknowledging that a total evaluation of higher education involves assessment of performance in all areas--teaching and learning, research, and public service--the Task Force recommends that attention initially be focused on the outcomes of the teaching-learning process.

11. Whereas the principal concern for higher education is the development of advanced cognitive or thinking behavior in individuals, there is a need for higher education and individual institutions to identify and emphasize the development of affective or emotional behaviors.

12. More sophisticated measures of student potential for higher education should be devised and used by institutions to indicate special affective or emotional strengths of individuals.

NEXT STEPS

Following a public meeting where all interested individuals and agencies react to and suggest amendments to the recommendations that have been presented by the four Task Forces, the Connecticut Commission for Higher Education will prepare selected recommendations for the Governor and General Assembly.

The work of the Task Forces will not end with these reports. Two of the four are continuing their examination of critical issues in their areas of study and there will be, from time to time in the future, other similar groups assembled to examine emerging and critical problem areas.

The Commission for Higher Education is extremely grateful for the suggestions that have been contributed by the many public-spirited citizens who served on the Task Forces.

COPIES OF THE COMPLETE REPORTS are available for study at the libraries of all public institutions of higher education in the State or at the Connecticut Commission for Higher Education, Box 1320, 340 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut, 06101.